

The Portfolio Process

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Abstract

The digital portfolio is a companion piece used for a graduate school application or to accompany a resume when applying in the workforce. A digital portfolio is a collection of best works and is a way to show what you have completed rather than just telling your audience about what you have done. The goal of this piece is to give a behind-the-scenes look into the creation of my own personal digital portfolio. The process of selecting content and creating a website for my portfolio is explained and explored. Each digital portfolio is going to appear different, and one of the essential parts of creating a portfolio is knowing your audience and speaking directly to them. A digital portfolio that focuses on getting into the business field is going to look much different from a digital portfolio that shows off an artist's best work. The goal of these portfolios are the same, yet they may look completely different. The creation of a digital portfolio is a rewarding one, and it results in a capsule that can always be updated and improved.

Creating a digital portfolio has given me the opportunity to go back through all of the work I have done over the years and compile it all into one place. There is, however, a process to curating a digital portfolio. From which pieces to pick, to how the site looks, and everything in between, there were decisions that had to be made. The goal of this presentation is to show a behind the scenes look into creating a digital portfolio, including all of the different choices and decisions that went into the creation of a digital portfolio.

Content Selection

Selecting content for a digital portfolio seems simple in theory. Only take the best pieces, the pieces that make you look good. This is a fine way of thinking, however, I

quickly found out that there is much more to that. The beauty of a digital portfolio is that everyone is going to approach it differently. Some may just use their best work, others may use the most relevant works for their audience. I tried to keep a balance of pieces in my portfolio. Every piece in my digital portfolio connects to an overarching topic; in this case, that topic is journalism. However, I broke down my portfolio in different sections. I wanted to show some variety in my portfolio, as I believe it is important to show that my writing can adapt to different formats and topics.

The Sports Journalist

The main section is sports journalism. This is my strong suit, and most of the pieces in the portfolio are focused on and around

sports. Continuing with the idea of a varied approach, I wanted to avoid simply having my sports pieces be simple game recaps. I also wanted to make sure that the only articles I include in the sports section are articles that are Millersville based. In doing this, my idea is that I can tell and share stories that only I could have written, and I'm proud of the articles that I have placed in my portfolio when it comes to the locality of it. Sticking with the idea of variety, I wanted to make sure that I had a variety of sports stories in this section. I wanted to avoid the simple "Millersville baseball won yesterday" stories because while they are essential pieces of any sports page, I believe there is more to sports than just game recaps. I want to tell the stories about the people behind the sports. That being said, I did include a recap piece in my portfolio just to show that I know how to do it. The two other pieces I have selected in this section are both feature stories that I am very proud of. One being an interview with a Millersville baseball player, and the other covering Millersville University's campus recreation and how they were forced to adjust to the COVID-19 pandemic. These are the types of articles I want to write in the future, and it was a no brainer to include them.

The Journalism Student

The next section is titled "The Journalism Student" and the goal of it is to show off my knowledge as a journalism student and everything that I have learned through classes at Millersville. I only have one piece in here, but I believe it is important to show that I know the fundamentals of journalism. The piece is your standard academic piece, and it focuses on sources in journalism, how to protect them and how to report with anonymous sources.

The Music Journalist

The third section I have included in my digital portfolio is something that I wasn't

sure of including, and that is a section for music journalism. Writing about music is something I do in my spare time, and I didn't consider it "professional" enough to make the portfolio. However, music is my second biggest writing passion behind sports, and I have written numerous pieces based around music. The first piece I placed in this section is coverage of a rap cypher that was performed and recorded on campus here at Millersville. Being my favorite piece in the whole portfolio, I needed to include it even if it isn't sports. With it, I also included two album reviews that I have written, because it shows my writing in yet another different form. A review allows for my voice to stand out more and it shows that I can be critical when need be. The music section is more of a passion project, but there are still real journalism pieces in the section.

Selecting content for the digital portfolio seemed easy at first, but it turned out to be more of a process than I had initially thought. Again, the beauty of the digital portfolio is that it is very wide-open to how you can approach it. Everyone's portfolio is going to be different in how they think about their own goals and what they want their portfolio to accomplish

Website Creation

The second leg of the process is designing the portfolio. Now, if you are like me, then you have no idea how to make a website. This was a true challenge for me, because I am new to website design. My main focus going into the creation of the website was simplicity. I've obtained that, but adding sections and personalizing the site was a little finicky for me. From the colors and fonts used, to the use of white space and the site map of your site. These are all concepts that I have heard of before, but never really needed to use until now. I wanted to make sure that the viewer of my portfolio is focused on the content and not the bells and whistles

of my site. I wanted to keep my site clean and professional, matching what a journalist's portfolio might look like in my mind. After toying around with the tools of web design, I became more comfortable creating my site.

The process of creating a digital portfolio was a rewarding one. It let me sit with everything I have done over the last few years, and it let me put together the pieces of

work that I think represent me the most all into one spot. The site creation was difficult, but at the end of the day it gives me another skill to use someday down the road. I recommend creating a digital portfolio to anyone, as it can be adapted to any field and can be effective for getting into any type of career.

Recommended Citation

Markley, B. M. (2021). The portfolio process. *Made in Millersville Journal*, 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.mimjournal.com/paper-85>